

AGM Minutes

24 September 2020

Apologies

Review of AGM minutes 2019 - accepted

Chairmans report 2019/20

Welcome

Good evening and welcome to this year's AGM.

In a break with tradition we've gone all high tech to hopefully satisfy all the current Health & safety rules for how people meet and interact. Luckily the rules don't say we can't eat Pizza, drink and generally have fun, so apart from the normal formalities, tonight, we're going to try and keep those important parts of our AGM traditions.

At this point, the Chairman is supposed to be reviewing the year and basking in the glory of what's been achieved and all of our successes along with thanking people for their continued support for our club etc.

At last year's AGM where Rich Coles kindly handed over the role of Chair then swiftly 'ran for the hills', I was thinking – 'That looks easy, what could possibly go wrong...?'

Little did I know...

Had I have known then, what was to come, I would have been a bit less confident and a bit more...well that feeling when you're about to start your first marathon

....'Bloody petrified'...

Anyway, my review tonight will be 'unconventionally' by splitting the year in '2 halves'. I'm also going to try and use pictures rather than too many words.

That said I'm going to be conventional in my message: We have a lot of glory to bask in, so I'll do my best to help you with some bashing.

I'll also try and paint a picture of what the future brings for us and how we're going to continue to build an even stronger club.

It seems such a long time ago now, but I remember the first few Committee meetings, sitting in the Steamer after a hard club run discussing monthly awards, Cross country, Christmas parties and Marathon Training runs etc – there's a lot going on behind the scenes, but with a good bunch of capable guys on the committee, all I needed to do was:

... order a few drinks, keep an eye on the time and nod at the right moments....

Things kicked off to a great start – with Halloween, running around Hemel scaring the locals - or should I say being scared by the locals.

Christmas quickly followed with the normal crowd of male GVH misfits taking over the steamer for 10 hours and finishing the night with one Vince's un-intelligible speeches.

We also had the splendid Christmas party at the Hemel Cricket club, which was so good, I can hardly remember the evening 😊

It's great to see so many juniors join us for another Christmas run around Hemel, ending with the traditional picture and cakes at the club house.

We have a great social side to our club, and just underlines the friendships that running as a common interest can create – Thanks Mary for all your efforts this past year.

it's not true that GVH is a drinking club with occasional running thrown in, so lets talk about the running:

I have to admit, I wasn't the biggest fan of Cross Country, having been exposed to its mud / rain and elbows some years earlier, but with Ed's encouragement and my new role of Chair, I throw myself at it this year [well I started the year as official tent putter upper and picture taker]

Anyway, what a season we had. I'm going to leave it to Ross and Angeline to comment on the detail, but I wanted to say how fantastic it was to see how people throw themselves at it.

As I was looking at the pictures, the word 'warrior' comes to mind, and I wanted to share some of these with you....

The men...what a fine body of men they are too...
But wait 'till you see them running – it's fantastic...

Now lets' see what they look like in battle....

Ed...'I've got this covered look'

Beamo...'I'm sober and in control'

Dave...'Only 5 miles? Just warming up...'
Nick...'If I can beat these guys, Its worth the pain...'

Ross...'It's all about technic...look good for the ladies...'

Stevie...'Please let this be over...it hurts...'

Si...'Singing helps take away the pain of being beaten by a 10 year old'

This is my favourite..

Phil Mercer....'I'm not letting the pensioner past even if it kills me...'

And finally we have Dylan..

If anyone actually had any idea what was going on in his head, they might need therapy"☺

So on to the ladies..[group]

They make it look so much easier... [Helen / Ang]

Ang didn't even need to take her jacket off ☺

It turns out all this smiling is just to syc out the rest of the field.

Our lady warriors' turned out to be a formidable lot

They were the team who brought home the medals
[Well done ladies]

As we came into the New Year, it became Marathon training time. And Helen will say a few words on this in a moment, but thanks to everyone who helped at these events, it great to see so many help us raise the club funds we need.

They have become very popular, attracting runners from all around the country and it was fantastic to see a visually impaired runner joining this year.

For the February MTR17 event, Helen had a marathon to race, so left it in my safe hands...well it turned out that the weather decided to throw everything at us with floods & winds overnight, making the canal in passable...

But never mind...all hands on deck, in 30 mins we had a new route, marshals in place and runners handing over money.

When disaster strikes – us warriors respond 😊

At The berko half we had an incredible 50 GVH runners, putting in so fantastic times – no doubt Ross & ang will comment later.

So, as the first half of the year started to come to an end, a bunch of us headed to Hillingdon to smash out a 20miler in preparation for the marathons we had planned..

Then the world changed – first we run out of loo rolls, then food and then Lockdown hits us.

Boris says, We're not allowed out except for exercise....That means running doesn't it?

Well I'm really proud to say, that GVH members really responded and boy did we respond...:

Virtual handicap, first of all solo, but then in small groups...

Probably the highlight of the summer was the Virtual relay which had over 75 people running and 16 juniors. Thanks to everyone who supported this crazy and highlight competitive day – seeing so many do so well, left me feeling privileged to be involved with our mighty running club.

So I would like to make a few comments on a few topics which have been raised by members.

The club house:

The future of training:

Hopefully you have gone along to some of the Tuesday rep sessions which have worked so well this year. Thanks to our coaches for organising and of course our LiRF's to running them. You guys have been brilliant and really help galvanise the club during this extraordinary period.

As for the future of races, well a few of us ran the St. Albans 10k a few weeks ago and what a different experience that was

An all new experience and while it lacks the spectators and social side, the race it's self was full on and competitive as ever.

GVH has remained strong, well connected and a vibrant running club with growing membership with currently 174 paid up members.

We're going to adapt a few things in the months ahead such as how paying our subs on-line rather than £1 / evening. Also the kit will need to all go on-line for the future. Steve and Maria will comment in a moment.

Finally Thanks to:
Simon Wallis – standing down...

Committee [moved to 2 x monthly zoom calls]

Coaches

And I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you all for the support, kindness and friendship you have shown the club during the year. As a tribute to you all, I've put together a little video to celebrate our wonderful club....

Finance report – Steve Newing

So these are the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2018. They have been verified this year by Matthew Haywood via Rob Bowler so thanks to them for doing this.

This year we have returned to profit of £2,064 for the year, which is fantastic for the club. Membership has remained fairly stable this year with currently 182 members signed up to the club.

The marathon training runs at the beginning of the year continue to provide the club with a vital source of income, without these it would be very difficult to remain operational. This year provided £7k profit from these which funds things like the clubhouse rent, affiliations, website costs, social events and the charity donation which in 2018 was provided to the Hospice of St Francis for £1,000. So a big thanks to all of you who take the time out of your Sundays in Jan-Mar to help these to go ahead.

As always, we are open to suggestions for ideas of reinvesting money back into the club, so if you have any ideas then feel free to let us know.

That's about all from me. Are there any questions from anyone?

GVH AGM 24 September 2020

Head Coaches Report

- Tale of two halves!
- Autumn and Winter went well – lots of focussed training, especially towards spring marathons, suddenly cut short. A few people still ran the distance, but most people just took stock of the situation and recalibrated.
- A few months of doing your own thing with a few ideas and videos from your coaches plus the virtual events, most notably the handicap brilliantly organised by Helen and then the wonderful relay kept motivation high and we were super impressed with how everyone managed to keep up their training and achieve great results.
- Finally able to start training together in small groups. This was made possible by the commitment and energy of our leaders and other coaches – George, Robert, Paula, Angeline, the two Simons, Peter, Phil and latterly welcoming back Naomi. We really enjoyed being able to work closely with our groups and provide some personalised coaching. Having seen their value, if anyone interested in becoming a leader then let us know.
- As restrictions eased we were able to grow the groups culminating with everyone together on a sunny September on Chaulden Fields.
- It's been a different summer but a rewarding one, particularly as we have seen so many of you make huge progress – that's why we coach!
- Year ahead will clearly have challenges and we will all need to be flexible and adaptable, maybe a time to focus on what running means to them, longer term goals, addressing weaknesses. But whatever our great team will make sure you get the best training possible.

Ladies' Captain Report by Angeline Cottrill

Despite the chaos that 2020 bestowed upon us, seems our mighty GVH ladies laughed in the face of non-achievement and went ahead with their brilliance as always.

Up until March we continued to award our Member of the Month accolade until things got a bit tricky! Our winning ladies were :

October: Kim Morgan

November: Sam Raffety

December: Ines Trent

January: Natasha Gibbs

February: Isabel Wilson

March: Sam Raffety and Kim Morgan joint

Following the last AGM and starting the Autumn season was the Hemel Triathlon on a very cold Sunday at 6am.

GVH had 3 participants: James Felstead, Kirstie Hardiman and me.

Kirstie finished 1st in her category and I was 3rd in mine but 1st on the run overall. Kirstie and I are the only competitors to have taken part in every Hemel tri since the inaugural race in 2016.

October

Next up was the Abbots Tough 10 which ends with a wonderful uphill finish!

This race saw GVH scoop the ladies team prize with Vicki Crawley-Wise, Claire McDonell and me making up the winning trio. Vicki also bagged the FV35 prize, finishing 5th lady overall.

I managed to get myself a PB of 50:52

October also saw the return of my favourite! CROSS COUNTRY! We had a larger turnout than the men (in fact we did for every match this season except the last one in Feb).

We had a few 1st timers: Laura Johnson, Caron Williams who had just completed LTR and was wearing club colours for the 1st time, Bethan Heaton also debuted - which was a lovely treat for her on her birthday! Isabel Wilson also took her debutant bow.

The next day, Mary McCluskey raced the Royal Parks half marathon and despite having also raced XC the day before, got a shiny new PB of 2:28:09. Kim Morgan also bagged a PB at the Royal Parks half with 1:54:58.

That same weekend, Helen Heathcote, Susie Ivin and Tina Searle went all exotic and jetted off to Bulgaria for the Sofia marathon and half marathon. For Susie it was her 9th marathon of the year and her 34th in total. Helen also took on the full marathon and Tina the half.

In a marathon closer to home, Kirstie Hardiman was the solo female GVH participant of the Abingdon Marathon and bagged a PB of 4:15:55.

Elsewhere, Bev Loczy took on the Amsterdam Marathon and also got a PB of 4:20:18

Leona Flaherty had a cracking October with a 10k PB at Lakeside and a week later, a course PB of 2:08:54 at the Water of Life half marathon.

The end of the month saw the return of a club favourite - The Ricky Road 10 miler. A hilly bugger we always moan about but we love the downhill finish! Its also a Herts Championship race which you can opt in to qualify for if you were born in Herts or have lived here for at least 9 months.

The women's team were awarded the 1st prize - medal winners were Vicki CW, Angeline and Helen Cook. Vicki also scooped the bronze in FV35 category. Kim Morgan got a superb PB of 1:20:37, her 2nd PB of the weekend after Cassiobury parkrun the day before (23:39). Sam Raffety was paced by the relentless task master, Andy Cook. He whipped her to the finish to get her a PB of 1:21:43. A terrifying game of cat and mouse was had by me and Isabel Wilson pushing us both to PB. On the verge of cardiac arrest, I crossed the line in 1:26:26 with Isabel just 6 seconds behind me. She scooped the 1st place in the FV65 category, which didn't actually officially exist. However, after Isabel and I spoke with the organisers after the event, they agreed that the category should be included for future races.

November

The first two races of November saw 2 ladies win prizes:

Heather Taylor sped to the finish of the hilly and slippery clay ridden Wendover Wood 10 miler with her dodgy calf still allowing her to win in 1:25:00

Tracey Cotton won the FV35 award in the Vets Championships at the Stevenage half, finishing in 1:46:34

November's cross country brought us the type of weather suitable for judgement day - wind, rain, grey skies and an abundance of mud! - but that didn't deter our army of women who rocked up to Teardrop Lakes, Milton Keynes en masse. We had a record turnout of 24 women which actually gives me proud goosebumps!

It was the National Cross Challenge which meant a larger than usual field of nutters, I mean runners.

Heather Taylor made her XC debut with the club as did Gemma Tucker, Sam Sparks and Caryn Robinson. Mary McCluskey was already in party mode as it was her birthday and she was determined to earn her prosecco! As always...!!

Amy Button made a dramatic entrance to the field, several minutes after the gun, with a few of our men pinning her number to her as she jogged to the deserted start line, yet still finished in 5th place for the GVH ladies. Isabel took a tumble on a hill but carried on like the warrior that she is and earned 2nd place FV65 for this match, starting a crusade to discover who her XC competition was in her category...

Teresa Reason romped home first for the team and within the top 100 which is tough going on such a talented and huge field.

Then Herberts Hole beckoned and lured us to its soggy offerings. Despite the slippery muddy hills, we beasted the course winning the 2nd place ladies team award with Teresa Reason, Kath Smith, Heather Taylor and Nicoletta Charalambous earning the glory. This was Nicoletta's first race with the club. Isabel was the 1st FV65.

It was the 50th parkrun for Sam Raffety so to celebrate she scooped a PB of 23:24, as did Kim Morgan in 22:55.

The Hertfordshire Half Marathon welcomed a trio of ladies who all earned a PB: Kim Morgan 1:44:57, Sam Raffety 1:50:29 and Helen Cook 1:56:30. You might remember the iconic photo of Sam at the finish being held up by Andy Cook who once again, paced her with the aid of an electric cattle prod.

Also bagging a PB of 2:05:00 was Sam Sparks, our solo runner at the Silverstone Half.

Further afield, Jo Kidd took on the Firenze Marathon in Italy, making a total of 10 marathon medals under her belt.

December

Come December, 2 of our LTR ladies were ready to race!

Nikki Tucker ran the Belfast Telegraph run Forrest Run 5k in 33:50 and Ines Trent ventured to Regents Park for the 10k finishing in 1:27:10.

XC took place at Luton with Kirsty Neale making her debut. There was a battle for the 1st GVH lady finisher with Kath Smith stealing victory just 4 seconds ahead of Teresa Reason. Isabel Wilson was the 1st V65 over the line

The Milton Keynes Winter Half offered PBs to 4 of our ladies: Kim Morgan 1:44:52, Sam Raffety 1:47:02, Natasha Gibbs 1:50:59 and Holly Beckett 2:01:19

A few ladies donned white beards and red suits to run the annual Santa Dash from Hemel town centre to Gadebridge Park and back: Maria Kenny, myself, Sam Raffety and Kim Morgan, all with our kids in tow, ho ho hoed our way around town. No thats not standard!

Teresa was our solo racer from the club the weekend before Xmas taking on the Portsmouth coastal marathon. Finished as 7th lady.

Post Christmas with our turkey bellies stuffed, we took on the Pednor 10 in the beautiful country lanes of Chesham.

Both Lisa Newing & Sian Hibbs each joined forces with one of our lads to make up 2 mixed relay teams which finished in 2nd and 3rd place respectively.

Teresa was our 1st GVH lady over line in a rapid 1:15:00, earning 5th lady overall and 1st FV40 despite having run a marathon the previous weekend. Kim Morgan scooped another PB with an impressive chip time of 1:18:14.

January

Our penultimate XC of the season was at Bedford, with the popular water feature! Injury and car problems for a few of the ladies meant fewer racers than planned but still a bigger turnout than the boys! It was heartbreaking driving past Claire and Vicki on the M1, with their broken down car, as all I could do was beep!

Olivia Howe made her debut at this match and was the 1st GVH lady to cross the line, with Kath Smith just 3 seconds behind! Nicoletta also made her debut and came in 3rd for the team.

On the 20th, we took to St Albans for the Fred Hughes 10 miler which saw a plethora of PBs for the ladies.

All with PBs in order of finish were: Nicoletta Charalambous, Kim Morgan, Isabel Wilson who also bagged the 1st prize in her category, Kirstie Hardiman, Helen Cook, Kirsty Neale, Sam Sparks.

Lisa Newing finished first although not a PB in 1:11:13.

Several miles away, Susie Ivin took on her 35th marathon in Gloucester.

February

The first Sunday of the month saw the return of the Watford half marathon with 6 ladies taking part. Vicki Crawley - Wise was the first lady to finish for the team whilst Kirstie Hardiman took on the impressive and honourable task of guiding a blind runner who was in training for the London Marathon.

Elsewhere, Anita Berwick braved the Pilgrim Challenge for the 2nd year running, which is a 2-day 66 mile ultra-marathon with a total of 6000 feet of elevation. Time: 16:19:06 in total

Paula Cook took along a bevy of ladies to run her 50th parkrun at Ricky and 3 of them scored PBs! Nicole Tucker 31:45, Ines Trent 39:33, Caron Williams 39:46.

Then our final cross-country match was at Campbell Park in MK & for the 1st time we had a smaller team than the men. Despite relegation, the women scooped some super prizes for the season. Teresa Reason won the bronze in her FV35 category. Isabel Wilson won the gold in her category

3 of us took part in all 5 XC races: Me, Isabel Wilson and Mary McCluskey. Thank you to everyone the ladies who took part and made it an awesome season with record turnout. It's a shame the men let us down!

Shaking their maracas in Seville, Helen Heathcote and Tina Searle took on the marathon there. Thank you to Helen for all her fantastic organisation of the marathon training runs. Lots of time and effort and coordination from Helen is very much appreciated by us all.

March

March started with the Berko half which was one of our championship races.

Heather Taylor was our 1st lady and 4th overall in a speedy 1:34:37

Our girls also won the 1st team prize: Heather, Teresa Reason (1:35:54), Nicoletta Charalambous (1:41:12).

There were several ladies who earned PBs too. They were Kim Morgan, Helen Cook, Kirsty Neale, Isabel Wilson, Nicky Moore, Mary McCluskey & Kim Rodwell. Taking part in the Berko 5 mile fun run, Helen Heathcote bagged a PB just a week after her marathon. Good going.

Victoria Park 10k - Ines got a new PB of 1:21:55

At the Hillingdon 20, a popular marathon training race, the ladies stormed the course. Nicoletta was the 1st GVH lady with a PB of 2:45:39. A few ran their 1st ever 20 mile race, they were Kim Morgan, Natasha Gibbs, Kirtsy Neale and Sam Sparks. Helen Cook grabbed a PB as did Ashleigh Taylor and Gemma Tucker.

Anita Berwick decided 20 miles wasn't enough so took on the Amersham Ultra, for 30 miles of mud. Ines Trent was on fire scoring another PB of 38:14 at Cassiobury parkrun.

Then we received the crappy news that everyone had been dreading. Marathons were cancelled. All that training and anticipation with nowhere to channel it. Unless you're Kim Morgan and Sam Raffety who laughed in the face of cancellation and organised their own inaugural "Hemel Marathon". Luckily they ran it just before lockdown and had a small support crew helping with water stops and motivating cheers. Rather than passing by the Cutty Sark and striding the streets of majestic Manchester, they beasted past B&Q and dodged past dog shit alley to complete the 26.2 miles with impressive pace and determination. It was the first marathon distance for both of them and they awarded themselves well-deserved medals before collapsing outside The Steam Coach! Well done ladies.

Then April happened...

Moving on to May!

We had the LOCKDOWN 24 HOUR VIRTUAL RACE brilliantly created and organised by Al Flowers. Participants could run as many 5 mile laps as possible within 24 hours, whilst adhering to government guidelines.

Both Maria Kenny and Anita Berwick clocked up an impressive 35 miles: Maria did this on a cross-trainer in her shed in 4:42 whilst Anita took the roads and trails in 6:57.

Teresa Reason clocked up 25 trail miles in 3:46 and Helen Heathcote also ran locally with 15 miles in 2:45.

The next virtual race was the awesome GVH Relay!

Our tiny-legged junior women had the opportunity of taking part in the virtual relay and did amazingly well, encouraged by their parents.

Congratulations to : Lydia Hardiman, Isla Stobie, Eliza Peters, Joely Burrows, Jess Terry, Scarlet Cooper, Harriet Kenny, Ellen Linden, Imogen Crowther and Lola Whiston.

Our adults fared well in the relay too with Maria Kenny scoring the fastest female mile in 6:31 which was also the very first mile run that day.

June

Saw another virtual race which Teresa Reason entered. It was the WORLD SERIES ULTRA X which had qualifying criteria for runners to get to the final. People joined from around the world and points were awarded for finish position in their category.

Teresa ran 8km, 15km and 19k in quick times to qualify for the final. Contestants were only told the day before the final, the distance they would need to run the next day. It was announced as 17km which Teresa actually did TWICE that day as she felt her legs hadn't worked properly in the morning!! Her 2nd effort was a speedy 1:14 which meant that she finished in 3rd place overall and 2nd FV40. However, a dodgy Ukrainian woman was subsequently disqualified for having a negative net elevation of more than 10%, so Teresa was promoted to 2nd place overall and 1st FV40. Cracking achievement Teresa!

Several of our ladies took part in the Virtual Summer Solstice Race which is usually a club favourite in St Albans. It was the first time many of us had seen our club mates faces and bottoms too as we chased each other along the Nickey Line! Our medals were sent in the post, a small cheer squad came along and it was a lovely reminder of the team race fun we'd been missing.

July came and went...

August

Saw a return to actual races with the ATW St Albans 10k. With staggered start times, Kellie Cox finished in 52:47 and Jane Percival in 53:32.

September

Brought us the GVH Virtual 10K Challenge. the prize for most improved time from a 10k on the same route during lockdown, went to Kirstie Hardiman who improved from 59:23 to 54:15, a whopping 7.4% improvement.

Heather Taylor won the fastest female with a speedy 45:33 which was actually the run leg of a triathlon! Tracey Cotton was 2nd with 50:40 and Vicki Crawley-Wise 3rd in 51:00.

The most recent ladies' race was last Sunday with Michelle Wells taking on a hilly trail marathon in Dorset, crossing the line in a superb 4:05. Well done Michelle!

I want to wish good luck to all of our ladies (and the men I guess!) who will be taking on a virtual marathon on 4th October: Sam Raffety & Kim Morgan are taking on the Dorney Lake

marathon. And those taking on the GVH marathon are: Kellie Cox, Jane Percival, Kirsty Neale.....

And look at the beautiful wonderment that awaits your victory....!!! (show medal).

A few special mentions

A big welcome to the new babies who have joined our mini Harrier squad!

Baby Zoe was born in January to mum Naomi and baby Nicholas arrived in August to mum Rossiana. Both mums are already out running again so I'm super impressed! Only chance to get peace and quiet I guess!

Gemma Felstead, our super coach, has done amazingly well with the challenges and races she has undertaken with her cycling. She has covered a distance of 5948 miles in the saddle which equates to an average of 22.5 miles every single day this year. Taking on cyclocross races and the Bovingdon bomber, her progress and achievements have been superb. Well done Gemma, you're an inspiration with your determination and tenacity.

Worthy of a mention for their super-high mileage in running this year are: Maria Kenny covering 1,322 miles year to date, Neet Berwick with 1,548 miles and Teresa Reason with a jaw dropping 1,925 miles.

It's been a very odd year but I'm so proud to be part of a team of ladies whose passion, determination and persistence has been second to none. You are all truly incredible!

AWARDS

Best Female Newcomer

This lady joined the club last year and has been a regular on training nights ever since.

In the last 12 months she has embraced many challenges always with enthusiasm and determination to do well.

She earned a PB of 1:38:13 in the Lee Valley 10 mile race in October and placed in the top 3 ladies in her category.

She signed up for the November cross-country just before her Silverstone half marathon which earned her a PB of 2:05

Each month she has taken on a race including Pednor 10, Fred Hughes where she scooped another PB of 1:32:10, the Hillingdon 20 miler (her longest run to date), and signed up for the Manchester Marathon too. I've also heard it mentioned that she'd like to take on an ultra next year!

She trains with focus and dedication, incorporating lots of strength training at the gym to keep her conditioned.

She has boundless positivity and always encourages her team mates when the going gets tough with her motto of "Just do it!"

I'm certain she will continue to grab PBs in the months ahead and I'm excited to see her progress.

The winner of the Best Newcomer Award is..... SAM SPARKS

Most Improved Female Athlete

This lady joined the club in 2017 and has gone from strength to strength with her running, achieving many PBs.

She gives 100% in all her training and always pays attention to the purpose of each session.

The improvement in her race times has been breath taking. In October last year, she ran the Royal Parks half marathon in 1:54:58 which, at the time, was a PB. Just 5 months later in March, she ran the Berko half in a speedy 1:42:58 knocking 12 minutes off. That's an incredible achievement and testament to the effort and focus she puts into her training.

In October, she ran the Ricky Road 10 mile race earning another PB of 1:20:37.

The day before Ricky Road, she ran a PB at Cassiobury parkrun in 23:39. She smashed that PB a few times shortly after and her PB which still stands was gained in December, again at Cassiobury, in 22:15.

This is an improvement of 7.8% on her time 3 months previously on the same course. Her age grading improved from 63% to over 69%.

At Pednor, she ran the 10 mile race finishing with a superb new PB of 1:18:14, and as 10th female. This was also the day after she ran her current 5k PB, so consecutive day PBs seem to be her thing!

However, not content with that 10 mile PB, she smashed Fred Hughes in 1:17:51

Her first 20 miler at Hillingdon was conquered with a brilliant pace giving a finish time of 2:53:51, and 2nd lady for the team.

She ran her own marathon with her buddy so as not to waste the epic training she had done. And she smashed it completely.

Over the past year, she has trained hard and raced with every ounce of energy she could muster and this has gained her massive improvements over all distances.

She recently messaged me saying, and I quote, "Each time I race I think I put everything into that - I won't be able to run that distance any faster" But she regularly does.

The Most Improved Female Athlete award goes to KIM MORGAN

Best Female Athlete

This lady entered a new age category in October last year, as if she needed any extra help to make her stats look better!

In traditionally fine form, she finished November's XC in the top 100 women which, in a field of super athletes at the cross-challenge in an enormous achievement. She was the 1st GVH lady to cross the line.

She smashed Herbert's muddy 6.5 mile Hole in 48:17 earning 3rd female overall and 1st for the team.

This warrior braved the December frost to take 7th place at the Portsmouth Coastal Marathon in 3:31:52.

A week later, she beasted the Pednor 10 in 1:15:00 as 5th female overall and 1st for the GVH squad.

The end of the XC season saw her take 3rd place FV35 which is superb in such a huge category.

She was in the winning team at the Berko half and took the 2nd prize in the World Series Ultra X Race Series.

Most importantly, she did her 1st ever and ONLY parkrun in January!

She has clocked up an immense 1,925 miles this year which equates to an average of 7.3 miles each and every day so far this year.

Superfast, immensely dedicated and focussed. The award for Best Female Athlete goes to.... Teresa Reason.

Multi-Sport Award

Ross and I had 2 possible contenders for this award, one male and one female. It was a close call but I am very happy to be awarding this accolade to a woman this year.

This lady has had consistent, structured training this year in all 3 disciplines of running, bike and swimming.

She has been mountain biking in Mallorca and Yorkshire, covering 90 miles and nearly 7000 feet of elevation as a standard and regular type of bike ride.

She undertakes frequent structured training on her static bike, including sets for VO2 max intervals, lactate threshold, endurance... and always pushes herself to the max.

In November, she won the Wendover Woods 10 mile trail run, and came in as 5th lady at Herberts Hole earning a place in the winning ladies team.

In December she was 2nd lady at the Waitlington XC 10k and came in as 4th lady at the Berko half in February.

Her swimming is never neglected: her technique is always practised with regular swim drills and plenty of open air lake swims in the mix too.

Her training runs are often challenging too such as her run up a Sri Lankan mountain for 6.5k at a 6% gradient with nearly 3000 feet elevation. She may have continued too if she didn't get covered in leeches!

Strength and conditioning training is also a regular feature in her schedule.

She got a superb new PB in her own half marathon challenge with 1:31:40 in June.

During the GVH virtual relay, she ran her 11 mile stint at an average pace of 7mm clocking 1:17.

Also in June, she took on the Endure 24 challenge as part of a team. She ran 6 legs of several miles each time to total 26.4 miles over 18 hours.

She rode to Bicester, to Box Hill, to Firlie Beacon climbing a few thousand feet in elevation each time, over distances between 63 to 104 miles. Standard rides for this strong athlete.

In August I set her a challenge of running her 1st ever consistent mile at a pace of under 6mm. A few weeks later, she didn't just beat that, she ran 3 of them back to back!

Also in August she took on 2 Bovingdon Bomber races which are highly competitive bike races amongst superbly skilled cyclists. She finished in 7th, 6th and 5th place in her races which is good going!

She won the virtual 10k challenge with a fantastic time of 45:33 as part of the Box End triathlon on 5th September. She finished that tri as 7th lady and was the fastest on the run.

She took on an Aquathon in Watford in August with a challenging trail run to finish.

Most recently I have been in awe of her relentless spirit to achieve and have marvelled at her sprinting ahead of strong male runners during training sessions.

She has previously finished an Ironman and is now training for an ultra-marathon.

I am extremely happy to award the Multi-Sport Trophy to.... Heather Taylor.

Good evening running fans! I hope you are all well

What a fine bunch of athletes I (virtually) see before me. I don't know about you but I'm a bit tired of the whole virtual thing I'm going to try to avoid saying virtual throughout this but it does crop up a bit.

I hope you are all enjoying the first ever and hopefully the last virtual GVH AGM thus far because this is the point ladies and gentlemen it where it takes a nosedive and goes downhill.

Well I don't think anyone expected the season to go the way it did, I personally saw myself lining up with the boys for all five gruelling cross country races, monthly club league races, half marathons, weekly ParkRuns and maybe a Marathon or two. I saw myself fist bumping - I said fist bumping - the men and the women in the start pens wishing them a good race, unfortunately injury for me and Covid 19 had different ideas. I won't go on about the virus as I'm sure we're all sick to the back teeth of it by now, I know I certainly am, I just hope that it didn't have too much of an impact on your lives because

you matter to me. Regardless boys you started the season with a bang!

I'd like to spend the rest of my time speaking this evening reminding you or informing you of the highlights of the season, and a lot of highlights there were, so much was achieved in such a short space of time. My 10 minute slot is already stretched to accommodate this so if I hear any snoring I'll be nudging your screen!

If I don't mention anyone or a particular race,

**it's not because you're not awesome, because you all are awesome
It's just because there is soooo much to get through.**

So sit back buckle up and really try not to doze off!

October at the Abbots Tough Ten, not a race I'm familiar with but will definitely have a go at some point.

Four of the first ten finishers at the Abbots Tough Ten were harriers– who combined to take the team win

Hamish Shaw in a cracking 38:43

Then 35 seconds later coming in behind his younger and considerably leaner teammate was

Dylan Wendythingy in (39:18) earning him the Vet 40 win, well done big boy. **Dave Goodman (40:06) just beating Simon Wallis (40:08) were the four team prize winners.**

The first long race of the season Chester Marathon - dollyoaks land

Not a usual event on the GVH calendar but this race hosted the Police Marathon Championship. PC Smith and Inspector Normoyle (I hope I got the boys ranks correct there!) both competing here, Smith a three-minute PB in an eye watering 2:51:21 and Normoyle 3:40:29.

Meanwhile over on the tax haven island of Jersey.

Michael Linden collected his first PB of the season at the Jersey Marathon, taking 16-minutes off his previous best. 3:17:40. I suspect that time will get knocked out of the park on your next marathon outing mate.

Rob Humphreys showed the marathoners that he can go just a little bit further running the Exmoor coast 50k just under 7hrs and 40 minutes.

Now on to my favourite - the Cross Country Season.

The first race at Shotover Hill Oxford

2 Cross Country virgins popped their cherries on this one Nick Crowther and also Linden despite having that Jersey Marathon still in his legs from just 6 days previous.

Now what I really want to touch on here are the runners who despite being only 8 days before the Abingdon marathon and should've been tapering possibly doing a light 3 or 4 mile jog around the block rather than running a tough and hilly cross country race ran their muddy socks off around the 2 lap course putting all their training and race prep and their marathons on the line to score the first of the much needed XC points.

These fine chaps were Antony Beamish, Si Wallis, Nick Crowther and Phil Mercer and me...

David Goodman who also ran the Oxford XC returned to or I guess stayed up in Oxford to run the Oxford Half Marathon the following day – which he completed in a cracking 1:28:21 and if I remember correctly did so with serious positive splits.

While all this was going on Peter Tucker was jetting first class to other side of the globe to to run upside down in the Melbourne Marathon in just a touch over 6hrs. Peter your medal collection must be a sight to behold, I guess along with Helen Heathcote, Suzie Ivin, David Goodman. All you international medal winners.

Maybe we should have a gallery on the Harriers website displaying members medal collections. I'll bring this up with Andy Newing.

Now the big one for the Autumn, the Abingdon Marathon

A race I have some fantastic memories of, spending most of the race alongside Phil Mercer and Anthony Beamish, it was fantastic to run side by side with you boys. And I don't mind admitting that I had a little man cry when it was all over, I was full of fatigue a ton of emotions and pride.

And of course I have to mention Jules Smith, no longer with us, no not deceased just no longer a member due to moving away, running his second marathon and marathon PB in as many weeks,

actually I think he had just one weekend between these races probably spent cycling and swimming and more cycling.

Jules first man home taking another 3 minutes of that 2 week old PB finishing in 2 hrs 48

Wallis next over the line looking trashed in his finish line photo in a decent 3:08

Wee baby Matt Ashby running his first marathon in 3hrs 09 Happy Birthday this week by the way I know the final miles were tough on you mate but marathons do get easier.

Our wonky Chairman Andy Cook Wobbled home sideways in a very respectable 3:13 Just 17 seconds Ahead of Nick Crowther 3:13 who mustv'e been staring at the back of his shirt for some time.

I was next with my best performance of the of the year, well on foot anyway I think the one on wheels was better- with a 3:15 – 22 minute PB

Behind me was big Anthony Beamish 3:18 PB

Phil Mercer 3:23

Then Gareth Tucker finally getting to the start line for his first marathon after injury prevented this previously. He finished in a solid 3:37 which is a fantastic first 26.2 mile race time. Well done mate.

Last but by no means least Roland Kendall also running his 1st marathon I believe in around 4 hrs 30

Late in October The hilly Ricky Road Run another club favourite always shows a good turnout. No medal unfortunately but they do give you t shirts that are too tight.. like a little crop top.

This race incorporates the Herts Senior Championships (just as long as you tick the box) you fine Harrier men winning both the silver and bronze team prizes.

Jon Roberts was the first man home coming in third V40 and tenth overall, in a time of 1:02:43

Next home were the 2 Anthonys of James and Willcox separated by only 1 minute and completing the silver winning team was Chris Dowling (1:05:36) Birthday PB

Next to romp over the line was Dylan I want a size small T shirt Wendleken (1:05:47) closely followed by Andy Wells (1:06:25) grabbing a PB.

Si Wallis 1:07 Vince Ellerby 1:08 and then just 10 seconds back with a PB was Dave Goodman with a 1:08:33 PB completed the Bronze team.

Andy cook crossed the line upright this time whilst on pacing duties.

Also Dave Wood earned a PB at the Luton 10k finishing in 42:47.

Into November now and a slightly quieter weekend but not for Mr Ultra aka Al Flowers who was running in the White Rose Ultra 30 in the Peak District, that sounds hilly! Al grabbed 6th place out of 94 finishers in just outside of 5 hours

Cross Country time again. Time for some mud and rain and lots of both.

Round 2 Teardrop Lakes The November Fixture

Considerably outdone by the ladies on the attendance numbers on this one. A mere 16 boys, I say a mere 16 boys but we weren't actually short on numbers compared to our usual attendance.

However a whopping turnout of 24 ladies meant that there was 1 and a half of these gorgeous girls to every man.

***Pause for thought* And back in the room.**

Imagine the ratio if only 12 of us lads had turned up..

Come on Boys - Must Try Harder.

As mentioned by Angeline this race hosts the National Cross Challenge and Also Oxford Uni v RAF Grudge Match

This extra talent in the field (and I don't mean the 24 ladies here) meant that our 1st man home Michael Linden was the 226th man to cross the line on the day. So imagine how muddy that was for everyone coming in behind that lot,

Conditions were particularly tough for this one, it absolutely hosed it down as the ladies raced and I remember the start of the course was

flooded after that heavy downpour and my shoes were full of water just from walking to the start line.

We had a couple of fallers that day, James Birnie slipped up and took an opponent with him. I hope that was a Tring RC runner James!.

And also I went down the backside of the first hill on my backside, probably much to the amusement of Si Wallis who was right behind me.

I reckon I was equally as quick on my arse as I was on my feet that day.

Popping his Cross Country cherry at this one Roland Kendall and I don't think he came back for any more XC matches.

November also saw the Harrier boys slipping and sliding their way up Herbert's Hole and onto more prizes.

Again Jon Roberts was the first harrier home but this time he was first up Herberts Hole, the dirty boy in tenth place overall, I meant muddy dirty, Ok?

2nd Vet 40 category in 42:58, closely followed by Michael Linden , Antony Beamish (44:04) and Hamish Shaw (44:39)

Those four speedy boys took the second place mens team award. Well done lads!

Onto the Herts Half at Knebworth, a personal favourite of mine. If you're looking for an early winter half, it's a gorgeous rolling

countryside half that starts and finishes in Knebworth House. Just be warned about the final hill before the finish line.

James Birnie showing some returning form running a solid 88 minutes on the nose beating me by just over 2 minutes as I just missed out on a sub 90 by only 7 seconds. However Simon Wheeler ran a cracker beating his PB with a 1:38 dead.

Andy Cook again on pacing duties I think pacing Sam ‘Pitstop’ Rafetty to that finish line photo, the one we all love.

The Hatfield 5 now

Just 4 lads running this time but 3 of 4 them with new 5 mile PBs

Dave Goodman adding to his recent talle of PBs (31:30)

Phil Mercer (32:53) PB

Stevie Newing just missing out on a PB (32:57)

Gareth Tucker (33:06) earning him the third PB of the day.

Another one of our Ultra specialists Chris Dowling ran Copthorne 50k his time of 5:28:23 earned him an incredible third place overall and 1st place MV40. Whatever you’re doing Chris keep doing it, but all these Cross Country miles ultra miles and I can’t remember how many miles you ran in the Chiltern League, I think we need a chat.

Talking of XC

Chiltern League Round 3 - Stopsley Park Luton The December Fixture

My favourite fixture because of 'that' hill just before the finish which sadly was not part of the course this time round due to a dispute with I think the council and the land owner. If you haven't run this one I urge you to do so, it's a flat and fast course until the challenging hill at the end which crests leaving no time to recover before the push for the finish.

Only 12 men in the team for this round but great performances none the less.

Anthony James 36:44, Season debut then Linden and Willcox making up the top 3

Beamish just out sprinted Tim Abbott – saw this battle for the line it was a close call boys.

Then Nick Crowther ahead of Gareth Tucker Who I believe passed 2 Tring RC runners just before the finish, good lad!

Completing the finishers were Newing, Birnie. Goodman. Mercer, Kidd

Meanwhile, while that Dirty Dozen were running an easy flat 6.5 mile ish Cross Country Al Flowers was somewhere in the middle of a gruelling 55 mile ultra-marathon the Cheviot Goat

Another superb off roader not running in the Chiltern League, Your club needs you Al!! He completed the course in 12 hours and 36 minutes in 20th place. Al you endurance machine, please share some of your secrets if only with just me that's fine.

And running just under half of Als distance Simon Wallis had another stab at his marathon PB running the hallowed tarmac of the Goodwood Motor Circuit solo finishing outside of his best 3:17:39. I know you were disappointed Si but it's still a great time, especially for a man of your age.

Mid December now

Peter Tucker travelled first class again, this time to East Coast of the USA, and ran his 37th Marathon. 6:01:10

As always just like Christmas The end of December gives us the Pednor 10

A great race to finish off the calendar year.

A fantastic turn out for the club with 15 men involved in racing. 14 of those running the 10 miles solo with only one PB on this day from Michael Linden in ninth overall and 3rd place Mv40. John Roberts with the help of Lisa Newing secured 2nd place relay team.

Chiltern Cross Country Round 4 Keysoe The January Fixture

The one with the puddle.

Only 9 men running on this day.

Andy Symonds making his XC debut 42:41, in 95th place. Michael Linden (44:08) just held off Antony Beamish (44:15) by a narrow margin of seven seconds

James Birnie 45:23 in next before Nick Crowther (47:31) passed Phil Heaton (47:40)

Phil Robbins making his season debut ahead of Stevie Newing (48:25).

Simon Wallis (48:45) and Hamish Shaw (50:07) in next who were both a bit off form. Then Andy Cook (51:34) finished ahead of Dean Kidd (54:02) who finished the race with less shoes than he started with, probably the funniest story of the cross country, one of his soles came away from the upper leaving the rubber flapping about below his foot but he finished the race regardless, that's the spirit!

We were obviously missing Dave Goodmans XC talents as he was competing in the Dopey Challenge at Disneyland in Orlando nearly 50 miles over 4 days.

5k on the Thursday, 10k on the Friday, a half marathon on Saturday and a marathon on Sunday.

I hope you took a few days out after that lot.

Still in January

Fred Hughes 10, hosted by our good Neighbours the St Albans Striders, and a favourite Harrier race. And a string of PB's were scored this day.

18 finishers for this one so another great show for the black red and green

First home Jon Roberts 1:02 – so fast ahead of James Birnie 1:04

Then the PB's began.

Antony Beamish (1:04:24) PB

Rob Humphreys (1:04:36) PB Just 12 seconds separating those two

Simon Wallis (1:05:28) PB

Gareth Tucker (1:06:14) Nike Magic Shoe Pb

Hot on his carbon plated heels was Steve Newing (1:07:22) Nike Magic Shoe PB

And the last PB on the day Trevor Normoyle (1:12:09)PB

You boys must love hills as you then went on to the Watford Half. I've just got to get you all to like mud then we can put the two together and what do you get... Muddy Hills! And you know where to get muddy hills...

11 Men taking on Watford Half but only 1 PB earned on the day that honour going to Michael Linden 1:25:50 that PB didn't stand for very long I think it got shaved slightly.. So I guess it was shaven.

Great runs also from Simon Wallis and Rob Humphreys both going sub 90 minutes.

The final Cross Country League Campbell Park The February Fixture

12 men this time taking on the slippery and boggy paths of Campbell Park

Andy Symonds 32:28 with another fine performance finished in 84th place. Next over the line Michael Linden who was a top 3 harrier in every race and also earning a captain's 5 star award for running all 5 races.

He was our highest scoring Harrier coming 13th place in the MV40 individual standings

Jon Roberts with his Season debut was followed by Tim Abbott in a cracking 34:36 his partner in crime Phil Heaton was just 23 seconds behind.

Dave Goodman taking a dip in a muddy puddle but still managed to beat

Simon Wallis. I was next in running for the first time in a couple of months.

Finishing the line up were Phil Mercer, Steve Newing with a captains 5 star award for all 5 races. Andy Cook and Dean Kidd (40:35). Also with a 5 star award running all 5 events. When I get a job.. I'll buy you boys a beer..

Unfortunately all the blood sweat and soles from our shoes that were shed throughout the season wasn't enough to keep us in Division 1 and we were sadly relegated into Division 2. My plan is we're going back up but I need your help!

Now this was a big one, the Berkhamsted Half an unbelievable 29 harrier men ran in this local hilly half. There's a long list of names on this one.

Jon Roberts romped home to another championship first place 1:24:41 and in 14th position overall.

Michael Linden then shaved a smidge off his 1 month old PB with a 1:25:33 but not to be outdone Gareth Tucker ran his socks off this day to a huge 5 minute plus PB finishing in 1:27:08.

These three fine lads took the mens team award away with them.

The rest of the order was

Chris Dowling 1:27:17 – PB –

James Birnie 1:27:29.

Anthony Willcox 1:28:30

Antony Beamish 1:29:02

Simon Wallis 1:29:31

Stephen Newing (1:29:58) showing good form and the last of the lads to dip under 90 minutes.

They were followed by Guy Woollett 1:30:08 and Vince Ellerby both running a 90 minute halves

Then Dave Goodman (1:31:58) The 2 Phils Heaton and Mercer with the latter scoring a (1:32:40 PB)

Billy Hawes (1:32:42). Dave Wood (1:34:12) PB

Trevor Normoyle (1:37:09).

Andy Cook the Big Gade Bear, I said big GADE bear. Running in a wooly suit to a decent 1:39:03

Paul Williams 1:39:00 PB

Charlie Cadogan (1:41:00)PB,

Andrew Watt (1:42:31)

Roland Kendall (1:45:54)

George Einchomb (1:49:33)

Neil Harper (1:54:37)

Rich Peters (1:55:31)

Tom Perry (1:58:56)

Adrian Stobie (2:06:03)

Charles Costin (2:43:44) Charlie it's great to your name on a race finishers list

And finally Peter Tucker (2:50:15) .

Still in the cold - The Hillingdon 20

Always popular for those marathon training.

First home by a small margin was Michael Linden 2:21:43 PB

He finished just 7 seconds ahead James Birnie 2:21:50

with Vince Ellerby (2:23:46) making up the first 3 harriers to finish.

Other Pbs on the day from

Phil Mercer Gareth Tucker

I'm skipping the virtual racing stuff as I think I've waffled on way too long already and I reckon we have a few snorers by now!

And

Fast Forward to August to the St Albans 10k

Somewhat of a return to real racing, on real courses, with real people around...

Only 5 lads taking part in this and as usual first home was Michael 38:23. PB, cracking time there mate. Also with a PB was Phil Mercer just missing a sub 40 with 40:06

Next home was Andy Cook (41:15) Si Wallis who celebrated his boozy birthday just the day before. And finally Dave Goodman 50:54 who had just ran an ultra-marathon I believe.

My last mention of the evening goes to Chris Dowling again going long by running the Ultra X 125, That's 125km in the peak district hilly again, why do ultras always sound so hilly?! over 2 days. Chris finished 15th overall in a time of 17:38:36. Bloody amazing Chris

Members of the month just briefly here.

Dean Kidd

Julian Smith

Coach George

Beamo & Lenny

James Birnie

Michael and Gareth

So all in all a cracking set of results there boys... even in the short window of racing opportunity that we were presented with. So lets get back out there and do it all again!

Best Newcomer

This runner joined the club at the start of this year but has taken the GVH bull by the horns and has applied himself well to all the training sessions and he has quickly become a regular on the weekend long run outings.

He got stuck in to the GVH Virtual Relay at the end of may running his 7.5 mile leg with an average pace of 7:14 per mile, good pace, however since then he has shown good improvement. In July he ran the GVH 2020 handicap route in a time of 25:54 that's a per mile pace of 6:19 which is good enough for 9th place on the Strava segment. More recently he ran his fastest 5k at the end of a 10 mile run, clocking a cracking 18:28. I look forward to seeing you in proper race action, Stuart Gallagher Best Newcomer. I hope we can get a chat at the next session, I guess I'll bring the award along.

Most Improved Male

A special one for me here, an award I won myself only 2 years ago. Usually this award goes to someone with a very young running age, by this I mean a newish runner, or at least someone who has just started training consistently as this is when the most gains will happen. Not so this time round.

This fine speedster ran his first marathon back in October, completing the course in a very respectable 3 and half ish hours which is a fantastic time for a first marathon. He always remains consistent in his training and rarely misses a session and this seems to have paid off hugely. Some illness over the Christmas period I believe was to blame for a slightly underpar performance at the Pednor 10 but he righted this at the Fred Hughes 10 by donning his Magic Nike Slippers and running a 1:06:14 PB, which I believe is about 4 and a half minute PB. Not content with this, although that 10

mile PB was something pretty amazing he went on to the Berkhamsted Half and beat his previous Half Marathon PB by about 5 and half minutes with a 1:27:08. Not only did he smash his PB but he was also 3rd harrier to cross the line out of 29 men thus making up part of the winning mens team. Unfortunately the virus scuppered his London marathon for this year but had it not he would've gone on to run another sizeable PB I'm sure. It's with great pleasure that I can give the Most Improved Male Athlete award to Gareth Tucker.

Unfortunately, I know he's not here to hear this, the Tuckers Junior are celebrating a wedding anniversary wining, dining and something else that rhymes with nining. Well done mate, You were absolutely smashing it pre virus, I can only imagine what you would've done if it hadn't gotten in the way. Boom.

Best Male athlete

This one should be of no surprise to anyone, He has consistently been our first man home in all of the races that he entered, I think all but 1 Cross Country race actually. He has won several individual category awards and been part of a team prize on many occasions.

**At Herberts Hole he led the team and finished in tenth place overall
2nd Vet 40**

**Ricky Road Run he was the first harrier home coming in tenth again
and this time took the 3rd place V40 spot**

**He was also first harrier home at the Fred Hughes 10 and the
Berkhamstead Half.**

**But never mind all those little achievements, Fred Hughes, Berko
Half, Yadda Yadda more importantly he is currently sitting in the
second place spot on the GVH Handicap 2020 Strava segment after
running the 4.1 miles at a blisteringly quick 5:59 per mile pace. So the
Best Overall Male Athlete award goes to Jon Roberts. Well done
champ. See you soon, I haven't seen you for ages.**

AGM Kit manager report Sep 2020

It's been a funny old year! Obviously there has been a distinct lack of formal racing which has inevitably led to fewer kit sales.

That said, we have managed to raise a superb amount of money, over £200 for our chosen charity through the sales of our lockdown T shirt which so many of you have purchased in support. Jamie at Teamware kindly rounded our club donation up to £5 per t-shirt and it has been brilliant to see so many of you out and about running in yours. FYI they are still available for purchase on the kit shop.....

As we head towards winter running with shorter days and dark mornings and evenings, now is a great time to do a kit review and have a think about what you may need for the colder months as well as the importance of being highly visible! We have plenty of Hi-vis stock as well as jackets, arm and leg sleeves and so on. As always you can order through me with a BACS transfer direct to the club or you can order straight from Teamware themselves. Speaking of kit review, I was rummaging in my kit drawer one morning last week for a warmer top and I stumbled upon my 25 years of GVH limited edition vest. Lots of you will remember when these came out in 2016..... then the penny dropped that next year will officially be 30 years of our incredible club!

What better way to celebrate than with a 30 year special edition club vest, or indeed other 30 year kit items! As always, your suggestions are warmly welcomed; this is after all your club and I am always happy to take on board new ideas and suggestions from you all! I plan to meet with Jamie from Teamware to discuss the 30 year design so watch this space!

Anyway I won't bore you with kit chat any longer so all that remains to be said is enjoy the rest of the evening and happy running- see you all out there 😊

Marathon Training Runs

January 575 runners

February 545 runners

January's run went without a hitch. In February we were informed by Ashridge College to change our route to avoid their private road due to an event. Andy & Helen Cook led the organisation (to allow me to run another marathon!). I'm sure they didn't anticipate the weather conditions too. With constant rain leading up to the weekend which created flooding along the towpath we had no choice to change the route. Andy & Ed did a fantastic job of creating this and communicating it to all volunteers.

We did get positive feedback on the route and many preferred the road rather than the canal. We now have an alternative course that can be used in future if preferred. Thank you to all for your flexibility on the day.

Club League

League races October - March

Ricky Road Run

Herberts Hole

Pednor 10

Fred Hughes 10

Watford Half

Berko Half

423 entries

73 PBs recorded by 28 different people

GVH AGM 24 September 2020

Head Coaches Report

- Tale of two halves!
- Autumn and Winter went well – lots of focussed training, especially towards spring marathons, suddenly cut short. A few people still ran the distance, but most people just took stock of the situation and recalibrated.
- A few months of doing your own thing with a few ideas and videos from your coaches plus the virtual events, most notably the handicap brilliantly organised by Helen and then the wonderful relay kept motivation high and we were super impressed with how everyone managed to keep up their training and achieve great results.
- Finally able to start training together in small groups. This was made possible by the commitment and energy of our leaders and other coaches – George, Robert, Paula, Angeline, the two Simons, Peter, Phil and latterly welcoming back Naomi. We really enjoyed being able to work closely with our groups and provide some personalised coaching. Having seen their value, if anyone interested in becoming a leader then let us know.
- As restrictions eased we were able to grow the groups culminating with everyone together on a sunny September on Chaulden Fields.
- It's been a different summer but a rewarding one, particularly as we have seen so many of you make huge progress – that's why we coach!
- Year ahead will clearly have challenges and we will all need to be flexible and adaptable, maybe a time to focus on what running means to them, longer term goals, addressing weaknesses...but whatever our great team will make sure you get the best training possible.

AOB

What will the club do about the MTR as a lot of the spring marathons are now in autumn?

Andy C said that the club would consider holding the MTRs in preparation for the autumn marathons if restrictions allowed.

Announcement of election results

Andy Cook announced that Angeline Cottrill had been elected as Ladies Captain and that James Birnie had been elected as Communications officer.

All other committee members had been duly elected.

Club handicap award

Helen Terry announced that Nicky Tucker had won the club handicap.

Club Members award

Was awarded to Ed Price

Club Committee award

Was awarded to Ed Price

Club Charity

This year was a tie between Sunnyside Rural Trust and Gade Valley Junior Section.